

Signed, sealed ... & almost delivered

United Huxley Envelope in Mount Pocono on cusp
of expansion, ready to add up to 100 workers

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STEPHEN BUNKER,
United Huxley Envelope president
"We're kind of the classic
Pocono success story."

BY SUSAN KOMAR
Newland Business Editor

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Chances are you've gotten something in the mail printed at United Huxley Envelope.

Maybe it was a credit card offer from Citicard or a magazine deal from Reader's Digest, two of the manufacturer's biggest customers.

Huxley will cut, print, gum and fold even more envelopes this year as it closes a New York City plant, moves 10 machines here and hires 20 to 100 people.

"We're kind of the classic Pocono success story," said Stephen Bunker, Huxley president.

The company moved from Brooklyn in 1986 to the business park just off Route 940 outside Mount Pocono. That was long before Wal-Mart and Perkins came to town and Geisinger opened a two-story health clinic nearby. Before relocating, Huxley was in a building with no room for expansion and the lease was up, said Bunker.

The Mount Pocono plant began with 25 people and 75,000 square feet. It's grown to 255 employees and 215,000 square feet.

"We've expanded twice and spent a lot of money on new equipment," said Bunker.

Huxley has sold its West 57th Street plant in Manhattan to another printing company and

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Shushella Devi of Pocono Summit (above) keeps up with the machines at the Coolbaugh Township plant, while Stephanie Hopkins of Effort (below) checks on a computerized printer. Devi and Hopkins will soon be joined by more machines and colleagues.

UNITED HUXLEY ENVELOPE

What: Envelope manufacturer

Where: Pocono Mountains Business Park, Route 940, Coolbaugh Township

Size: 215,000 square feet

Employees: 255

Salaries: \$9-\$21 per hour

Opened: 1995

Volume: 4.2 billion envelopes this year

Owner: Workflow Management, Greenwich, Conn.

Customers: Citibank, American Express, J.P. Morgan, Chase, Smith Barney, Reader's Digest, TV Guide

On the Web: unitedenvelope.com

Job info: Walk-in applications accepted 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The company will participate in a CareerLink job fair 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 12, at Fernwood Resort in Bushkill.



I N S I D E H U X L E Y

■ One machine

can print 850 envelopes per minute.

■ Plant receives

six truckloads of paper per day.

■ Different types

of gum are used for envelope side seams and flaps.

■ Paper waste is

swept up, bundled and sold to recyclers.

■ Plant stocks

15-day inventory of paper.

PERIOD.

HUXLEY

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expects only about 10 employees to come to the Poconos.

The company is working with local schools and Monroe County CareerLink to find more workers. Jobs include entry-level machine operators, inspectors and packers who start around \$9 per hour. Experienced, skilled mechanics make \$21 per hour. Huxley's average wage is about \$17 per hour, said Bunker.

"Our biggest challenge has been finding skilled labor," he said.

Human resources director John Reedy added, "So far we're doing OK, but we still don't have that pool of manpower that we need here."

Work at Huxley has evolved from paper-folding into more sophisticated graphic arts challenges that jazz up plain old envelopes with full-color photos and illustrations. For instance, a project for Haband features an ocean scene on the address side and a detailed photo of a bath and shower kit on the back.

The rumble of Huxley's computerized presses rolling out 4.2 billion envelopes per year can be heard even before you enter the building. Workers wear bright orange ear plugs in the big, open plant filled with equipment, drums of ink and giant rolls of paper.

Some machines run 24/7. Employees willing to pull a 12-hour shift of 7 to 7 work three days one week and four days the next.

"They're guaranteed every other Friday, Saturday and Sunday off. That's a valuable (recruiting) tool," said Reedy.

Huxley offers training, but some manufacturing experience is helpful for job-seekers.

"The folks who are successful here do have some type of general mechanical background either from a vo-tech school or some experience," said Reedy.

Huxley has applied for a \$500,000 state grant to set up a customized job training program for its expansion. The money will pay for the training, but the state will monitor Huxley's program to make sure jobs are created and workers learn skills.

In addition to printing, Huxley inventories up to 250 million envelopes for customers. Other orders are shipped to high-speed inserting operations where the envelopes are stuffed and mailed with solicitations that just might end up in the garbage once they are delivered.

The national "Do Not Call" crackdown on telemarketers has diverted advertising dollars to the direct-mail industry, said Bunker.

"It's a mature industry, and you might think it's declining because of electronic communication, but it really isn't," he said.

One project that doesn't get trashed is the auto registration envelopes for the state Department of Transportation. Huxley makes the tricky white packets that have a clear poly window on one side for the address and a smaller window on the back for the registration sticker. The envelopes go to Graterford state prison, where inmates hand-stuff the thumb-sized stickers.

Huxley's additional equipment will arrive in Mount Pocono over the first weekend in April.

The company will participate in a CareerLink job fair 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 12, at Fernwood Resort in Bushkill.

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